



# SUCCESS STORIES

REPORTING EXAMPLES OF OUR PROGRESS IN CARING FOR THE LAND AND SERVING PEOPLE

## PARTNERSHIPS HELP FOREST WITH ILLEGAL DUMPING ISSUE

*Partners Collaborate to keep southeast Ohio beautiful!*

In February 2012, the Wayne National Forest (Forest) in southeastern Ohio became a partner of Keep America Beautiful, Inc. (KAB) with the formation of Keep Southeast Ohio Beautiful, an affiliate of KAB that covers thirteen Ohio counties. While the Forest spearheaded the formation of the affiliate, it's managed by several community partners that meet on a regular basis to discuss the business of the group.

As one of the partners in helping make southeast Ohio a better place to live, work and play, the Wayne National Forest, Keep Southeast Ohio Beautiful, Keep Ohio Beautiful and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources partnered with the Ohio Department of Transportation to host the kickoff of the State Roadway Cleanup, all in support of the KAB Great American Cleanup effort held on Saturday, April 14<sup>th</sup>.



More than 100 volunteers attended the event at the Wayne National Forest headquarters. The volunteers collected 125 bags of litter off roadways in Athens and Lawrence County. Volunteers also collected 780 pounds of recyclables. The event partnered with the Athens City-County Health Department to host a free Community Tire Drop-off that yielded 1500 scrap tires. The Wayne's Wild Weekend Discovery Series delivered an anti-littering message to several local children.



On the Ironton Ranger District (IRD), they were quick to participate in a Friday, May 4th Great American Cleanup event known as the Lawrence Countywide Cleanup, held every year by the Lawrence-Scioto County Solid Waste Management District.

With the help of local volunteers from the Symmes Creek Restoration Committee (shown at left), the IRD was able to double its efforts to beautify Lake Vesuvius. The Symmes Creek Restoration Committee partnered with the Forest by using canoes to retrieve and remove two truckloads of trash from Lake Vesuvius, while some individuals hiked the lake's edge to improve the Lakeshore Trail. Compared to last year's cleanup effort, the general consensus was that less

trash was present. The district attributes the decrease in trash to their annual cleanup efforts, as well as stream flood control and cleanup efforts by the Lawrence County Community Action Organization. The organization has cleared blocked streams and picked up trash from area streams leading into Lake Vesuvius. In 2010 and 2011, heavy rains flooded area streams bringing high volumes of trash into the lake.

The IRD has made a huge impact in the last six years picking up illegal trash dumps. They credit their success to the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA). Thanks to the Ohio Scrap Tire Cleanup Program, administered by Ohio EPA, it is helping the entire Wayne National Forest properly dispose of thousands of tires that have been illegally dumped on the Forest.



In the last two years, over 3000 tires have been collected and removed for recycling from the IRD. Some are shown in the picture at left. Last month alone, 700 scraped tires were removed from the district. On the Athens Ranger District, more than 400 scraped tires were recently removed by the Ohio EPA. Currently, the Ohio EPA is in the process of collecting an additional 500 tires that were found, furthering the collective effort to keep southeast Ohio beautiful.

The state and federal partnership started in 2009, after the two government entities worked on a project in rural Gallia County. Prior to 2009, the Forest had to pay (\$1.25 to \$1.75 a tire) a facility in Ashland, Kentucky to dispose of the tires properly.

Dumping tires is a felony offense. Tires are ideal breeding sites for several species of mosquitoes, some of which carry diseases. Tires are easily filled by rain and collect leaf litter, which provide an ideal “incubator” for mosquito larvae

The public is reminded that illegal dumping on the Forest destroys the natural beauty and degrades habitat, as well as discourages people from visiting trashed areas. Additional awareness is necessary by all community residents and Forest users to control illegal dumping within not only the IRD, but the entire Forest.

Efforts like the two Great American Cleanup campaigns and the partnership with the Ohio EPA, help visitors enjoy the unspoiled beauty of our National Forests, which belong to all Americans.

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